THE EYE:

BY OBADIAH OPTIC.

——VARIOUS OBJECTS FROM THE SENSE,
VARIOUSLY REPRESENTING. MILTON.

Vol. I.] THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 18, 1808. [No. 7.

"They have Moses and the prophets."

I HAD just sat down to continue my essays on the general and salutary effects resulting from industry, when my uncle *Zebedee* came in. Nephew, quoth he, I have been out of town some time, and consequently did not see a publication which has appeared under your name, otherwise you should have heard from me sooner. I do not nephew, take it kindly that you have made so free with my opinions. You have exposed them in your "*Eye*" as resulting entirely from superstition, when you must assuredly know, that every argument which can be brought against communication with spirits now, would tend to prove one of two things, first, that either there were no spirits at all, which was the opinion of the ancient Saducees, or secondly, that altho' there were spirits, and that they conversed with men of old times, they would not deign to converse with men now. If, said I uncle, laying my spectacles down on "*Campbell's exposition of the gospels*," which I had just been reading, I have offended, I am truly sorry for it, I wish to go on in a straight course, whilst I conduct the "*Eye*" *to do good*, but not hurt man, woman or child. Prejudices, my dear uncle, are fair game, and I shall not spare my own more than your's as soon as I discover them.—In ancient times, GOD gave to holy men a spirit of prophecy, for the grand purpose, that when the power of testimony and the power of miracles should cease, by the fulfilment of prophecy, in the revolution of empires, the overthrow of nations, and the establishment of governments, the truth of the gospel and also the Mosaic dispensation should be placed beyond controversy. This is done: The history of the world, with respect to its great revolutions and final end, is complete and fully revealed in the scriptures; the pro-

phecies are every day fulfilling, and will continue fulfilling to the final consummation. There therefore appears no need that man, however pure or holy, now should be gifted with a spirit of prophecy, which was assuredly a supernatural gift; and assuredly the philosophic Christian, speaking concerning miracles was right, who said the AUTHOR of nature never wrought a miracle to do that which could be done without the intervention of infinite power: Against the continuance of the spirit of prophecy now, we have a powerful appeal, "they have MOSES and the prophets," these the Jews had; but we have MOSES, the prophets, the gospels, the epistles and the revelations, and therefore the prophecy is closed: For now, what could we be taught thereby? Surely no new doctrine, against that we are warned; an apostle says, "if an angel from heaven teach any other doctrine than that you have received, believe him not;" I therefore uncle, spake against the opinion, not against you, indeed, a foresight concerning things to come, would injure us, therefore wisely is futurity buried in obscure darkness.

I wonder nephew, said my uncle, much agitated, that you can thus argue against your own conviction; have I not foretold to you many things?—Did I not foresee that the dreadful wickedness practised in St. Domingo would call down an awful punishment upon the inhabitants?—Did I not tell you that the sufferings of the poor negroes had nearly filled the cup? and that I saw the sword of vengeance unsheathed?—Did I not tell you, at the commencement of our revolution, when you were crying through fear, that no harm would come to you, and that the English would be entirely defeated?—Did I not foresee that the coalesced powers would not prevail against France? But what need I say, Did I not foretell the fate of Germany, the defeat of Prussia, the humbling of Russia, and that England would not let us remain quiet?—and yet you talk of my prejudice and superstition! It was in vain to argue, my uncle had gotten on his hobby-horse, and there was but one way to stop him; I rose from my chair, took him kindly by the hand, and said, my good uncle, pardon me, I know all your opinions, as you view them, tend to make you more grateful to the Deity, and less arrogant in yourself; the motto on the family seal, "What have we which we have not received," rises ever fresh in my memory; even your prejudices, in that respect, are in some degree amiable: I cannot, I dare not say your opinions are right, but I believe, were they removed from your mind, you might be, in your present state less hap-

py. Aid me now and then with your advice, and for the future I shall not, if I can possibly avoid it, jostle against any of your favourites in my future disquisitions. This was the way to melt him: The old man was unable to reply; he rose, pressed my hand to his breast, and hobbled out of the room as fast as old age and infirmity gave him permission. OBADIAH OPTIC.

ORIGINAL.

THE SPECTACLES.—No. VII.

Honour, that praise which real merit gains,
Or e'en imaginary worth obtains,
Here passes current. GOLDSMITH.

AFTER the accomplishment of our purposes we forbear from taking a retrospective view of the means employed in gaining them. It is natural for us to judge of the propriety of measures, by their success, and impute a fortunate event to our own sagacity; while we forget that it may be owing to the ignorance or inattention of an opponent. The most unbounded applauses have been bestowed upon generals, whose fortune, rather than skill, procured splendid victories; and on the contrary, those who suffered a defeat in spite of the wisest plans, have been handed down to posterity as unacquainted with the science they professed. Had HENRY V. lost the battle of Azincour, instead of the title of *hero*, that of a *rash fool*, would have been connected with his name.

The world hastily judges from slight grounds, because it is not sufficiently interested to collect all the circumstances from which a just opinion may be formed; sudden conclusions strike the mind that is too indolent to satisfy itself, and these, when adopted, are adhered to with unaccountable pertinancity; proud of the sentiments we cherish, vanity persuades us into a conviction of their correctness, and induces us to defend them. A smart repartee calls forth our admiration, and we rashly pronounce the author a man of genius; and we as readily condemn him who is not fascinating at the first interview. Lord CHESTERFIELD, somewhere in his letters to his son, strikingly illustrates the excess to which this caprice is carried, by an instance of a worthy man who suffered derision all his life, because, perhaps through inadvertence, he unfortunately spelled the word *wholesome* with an omission of the first letter.

To be a competent judge of the talents of another, the strictest habits of intimacy are necessary: Some men have a facility of displaying all their acquirements, while others, who are in truth much wiser, seem, upon a partial acquaintance, to be mere fools. We ought to guard against placing too much confidence in report of a man's merits or demerits, there are so many motives to cause characters to be placed in an honourable or dishonourable point of view, to ingratiate ourselves into favour, or to gratify our revengeful dispositions, we speak well or ill of the object; and frequently to acquire the esteem of others, we commend where commendation is not due.

The actions of mankind are generally dictated by self-interest, and if a benefit should accrue to us, we lavish our praises without restriction; the incentive is overlooked, and the act rewarded; and we are guilty of a more common error, on the other side, for, however good the intention, if not effected as we wish, censure is as freely bestowed. Thus we go on, neglecting to duly appreciate virtue, and equally indifferent to the discouragement of vice.

Man is as inconsiderate as it respects his own conduct, he undertakes certain pursuits without looking forward to the effect, he rashly confides his failings to the power of another from whom he has no assurance that they will be corrected, or concealed; he converts an associate into a friend, and imprudently gives a ground for scandal. T.

ORIGINAL.

MUSHROOM.—No. V.

——————— From shop to shop
Wandering, and littering with unfolded silks
The polish'd counter, and approving none,
Or promising with smiles to call again. COWPER.

THE day is fine, said my friend CAUSTIC as he leaned over his half door, fine day for the month of February—true, said I, chusing only to give short answers to questions put to me across the street; you are low spirited, said he, walk over and let me enjoy a little of your society—the sun, the air, all seconded his request, and after some little danger from the ill-managed horse of a buck, who thought he rode prodigious well, I got safe across, shook CAUSTIC by the hand, and was shewn to a seat among demijohns, phials, gallipots, and "an

alligator stuffed"—CAUSTIC thinking he had secured me for the rest of the day, unbent his brow, untied the knot of his green baize apron, and was just opening his mouth to introduce a subject for argument's sake (of which he was very fond and in which, unless you had stentorian lungs, he was sure to be loudest, and always had the last word) when Miss CLEMENTINA CAUSTIC bounced into the shop, bounced I say, for though she was fast verging to her fortieth year, she still endeavoured to imitate the vivacity of sixteen; she had her hat and veil on—Whither so fast? said her father—A shopping, papa, said she.—Alone?—O no, the Miss MODES are going with me—No gentlemen? said her father—No papa, unless the DOCTOR will do us that favour, said she, dropping a profound court'sy, and giving me one of her prettiest looks through a corner of her veil which was of open work—I had never been much in female society—I was no gallant—but whether it was the court'sy, the look through the veil, or the tone of her voice, I know not, but I rose mechanically, and bowed assent.

We called for the Miss MODES, found them on the tip-toe of expectation, and began our route: Mrs. TIFFANY was the first we attacked—La Mrs. TIFFANY, how-d'e-do, I am told you have elegant muslins, very cheap.—Yes, ma'm; and immediately the counter was strewed with muslins of all kinds: How much is this? 10*s*. 6*d*. O dear no, impossible, a friend of mine gave but 10*s*. the other day. It must have been a mistake ma'm, that is the lowest price. By this time Miss CLEMENTINA and her aids had unrolled every piece upon the counter, and began to turn their attention to something else—You have elegant pelice flannels, Mrs. TIFFANY, let us look at them. Here the flannels were produced, opened, the colours praised, thrown aside, and something else priced, until the store of Mrs. TIFFANY looked as if "chaos was come again," the counter exhibited one confused heap of silk stockings, gloves, chintzes, cambrics, lawns, muslins, &c. &c. at length the trio thinking they had worried Mrs. TIFFANY sufficiently, dropped her a profound court'sy, told her they would *call again*, and without shewing her even the colour of their money, as the saying is, walked out of the house; I rose from a bale of nankeens, on which I had been sitting cursing my unlucky stars that brought me into such a scrape, slouched my hat that Mrs. TIFFANY might not know me again, and sneaked after them.

The next victim was Bob Lutestring: Bob was a handsome young man, and of course it was all the rage to go to his store; we found it crowded—the master bowed and smiled—the young men, in their assiduity to serve their customers, leaped over the counter with as much ease as they would over a straw; this thing was thrown down, and eagerly unrolled—that thing was thrown to one side as too dear, another was too cheap—all would not do; we left Bob as we had Mrs. Tiffany. It would be an endless task to relate our adventures in every store into which we *went a shopping*, up second street, down third—up market street, north and south, until at length they, to my great satisfaction, agreed to go home with only a single skein of silk, which Miss Clementina had purchased to make (as I afterwards found out) a watch-string for an old sea captain, who she *thought* was courting her. My services however were not to end here—I was invited by Miss Clementina to stay to tea, as the Miss Modes were to be there, and the Captain was expected; finding myself in too ill a humour to behave myself even tolerably, I begged half an hour to attend to some business at home, and obtained it with an assurance that they would wait tea for me.

I used the first moment of my liberty in making my way for my arm-chair, and in it reviewed the *labours* of the day. Surely, thought I, my fair countrywomen—you do not think of the disadvantage you put store-keepers to by going a *shopping* for amusement, or your gentle natures never would be guilty of it; to use the language of the frogs in the fable "what is sport to you, is death to them:" They treat you with affability and politeness, and in return, some of you reward them by pulling down and tossing about goods that require to be kept with the greatest neatness and care. You do not consider that while you are rumpling a piece of silk without any intention of buying, you are ruffling the temper of the shopkeeper, though his interest requires him to bear it patiently and put on the mask of good humour. Let this growing practice be abolished, my dear girls, and—but it is tea time, and perhaps Miss Caustic waits.

FUNGUS.

THERE cannot be a more glorious object in creation, than a human being replete with benevolence, meditating in what manner he might render himself most acceptable to his Creator, by doing most good to his creatures.

ORIGINAL.

THE TORTOISE.—No. II.

Yet not the less obsequious was his brow,
Nor less profuse of courteous words his tongue. AKENSIDE.

THE crowd had passed by, clamorous in their declamation against one who was impelled by a police officer to a place where the rudiments of justice are impressed on trembling criminals: Having no engagement of more consequence, I was willing to gratify my curiosity, and followed the multitude, but with no intention of doing evil—no, not even to one whom the popular voice denounced as a villain. I entered the room just when the appearance of him who was to determine the fate of the accused, had awed the hitherto intemperate spectators into a respectful silence. The officer now presented the hero of the scene at the shrine of his country's laws, with a succinct but positive crimination of his guilt, alleging that he had stolen the pocket book of a gentleman, whose name he believed, from papers found in it, was TITULAR!—Judge of my astonishment at the unexpected termination of this declaration—I started back a few paces, clapped my hands to my pockets, and was equally surprized that this article of my property was not there. How quick is the transition of feelings when various objects combine to arouse them—at this moment, when two incidents in rapid succession had produced astonishment and anxiety, the thought of recovering my pocket book and its contents shed a drop of the cordial balm of hope into my bosom, which no sooner fell than the mist of doubt counteracted its virtue and repelled the rising joy—a pocket book, to be sure, was handed to the minister of justice, and it was also too true that mine was not in my possession; but, as many things of a like nature bear a near resemblance, I could not determine without a nearer examination; and to identify it would be to accomplish two important objects—the recovery of my property, and the loss of liberty and character (if character he had) of the culprit.—After my first emotions were a little subsided, I stepped forward, examined it attentively and found my name written in a secret fold; I then scrutinized the contents and to my grief missed an article which I held in high estimation, not merely on account of the precious metal of which it was made, but because it was the remembrancer of a departed friend, whose memory I hold dearer than much gold:—A tear fell from my eye—I

could not restrain it;—accuse me of unmanly weakness ye who never lost a friend;—those who have, will excuse in me the effect of sensibility this circumstance called into action. Having expressed my satisfaction with respect to my property so far, and intimated my sorrow for the still greater loss I had sustained, the justice handed me a ring, asking if I recognized what I had missed? He was a man, who, whilst cloathed with the robe of justice, had in his bosom a sympathetic heart—he needed not the sound of words to convince him it was mine—he read it by the effect its appearance produced in my countenance; and my affirmation convicted the prisoner.

As it is natural for a person at a critical moment, to bestow all his attention on the object most immediately interesting, so when I first entered the room, the extraordinary declarati[on] I heard, giving rise to a chain of peculiar incidents, in which I was most importantly concerned, I had not cast an enquiring eye at the prisoner, until now the well known sound of "*Please your honour*," struck my ear—it was the beggar, to whom an hour before I had given my mite to relieve from apparent distress—but oh, how changed was he in my view then I commisserated his sufferings—now—but I repressed the rising emotion of anger and felt for the depravity of the human heart, which impelled man to the commission of crimes of the deepest die—such was his!—Ingratitude cast a deeper shade on his guilt.—He was too a robber of the poor; for, disguised as an honest but indigent fellow being, his appearance and address extorted from those who "felt for other's woes," that pittance which would rejoice the heart of a virtuous poor man. He who had before appeared to me as infirm and old, was now, being stripped of a grey wig and other appendages, evidently robust, in the vigour of life. Taking advantage of the inadvertent disposition his petition excited in me, he perpetrated the crime for which he was now committed, and which was discovered by his offering for sale at a low price, the ring I prized so highly.

The crowd escorted the culprit to the prison, and I was directing my steps homeward, when a person clapped me on the shoulder—his countenance was familiar to my recollection—it was HARRY WILSON, the companion of my juvenile days; we had not seen each other for several years; his appearance therefore, at this particular time, when gloomy reflections were beginning to corrode my mind, was happily calculated to dispel the gathering cloud—the sun-shine of joy

beamed into my heart, and we were soon seated at my fire-side, where my spirits were refreshed by animated conversation on subjects congenial to my heart. TIM TITULAR.

SELECTED.

BIOGRAPHICAL ANECDOTE OF BARON HOLBERG.

THE history of polite learning in Denmark, rose with the late famous baron Holberg. This was perhaps one of the most extraordinary personages, that have done honour to the last century. His being the son of a private centinel, did not abate the ardour of his ambition; for he learned to read, though without a master. Upon the death of his father, being left entirely destitute, he was involved in all those distresses which are common among the poor, and of which the great have scarce any idea. However, though only a boy of nine years old, he persisted in his studies, travelled about from school to school, and begged his learning and his bread. When at the age of seventeen, instead of applying himself to any of the lower occupations, which seem best calculated to such circumstances, he was resolved to travel for improvement from Norway, the place of his birth, to Copenhagen. He lived here by teaching French, at the same time avoiding no opportunity of improvement, that his scanty funds could permit. But his ambition was not to be restrained, or his thirst of knowledge satisfied, until he had seen the world. Without money, without recommendations, or friends, he undertook to set out upon his travels, and made the tour of Europe on foot. A good voice, and a trifling skill in music, were the only finances he had to support an undertaking so extensive; so he travelled by day, and at night sung at the doors of peasants' houses, to get himself a lodging. In this manner young Holberg passed through France, Germany, and Holland, and, coming over to England, took up his residence for two years in the university of Oxford. Here he subsisted by teaching French and music, and wrote his Universal History, his earliest, but worst performance. Furnished with all the learning of Europe, he at last thought proper to return to Copenhagen, where his ingenious productions quickly gained him that favour he deserved. He composed not less than eighteen comedies; those in his own language are said to excel, and those which are wrote in French have peculiar merit. He was honoured with nobility, and enriched by the bounty of the king; and a life begun in contempt and penury, ended in opulence and esteem.

Poetical Department.

ORIGINAL.

EDWIN AND ELLEN,

A TALE.

WHEN Columbia, spurning wrong,
Snatch'd the flamy dart of war,
And peal'd, her mountains wild among,
The trump of liberty afar.

Amongst her sons, inspir'd by truth,
Who heard the call, nor danger fear'd,
Was EDWIN, brave heroic youth,
To gentle ELLEN long endear'd.

The morning broke, drums beat far off,
The hero from his love must part,
He press'd her lips—'twas not enough—
She sigh'd—he clasp'd her to his heart.

Ah me! she cried, nor could restrain
The boding fears that chill'd her soul;
Ah! shall I press my love again,
When battle's thunders cease to roll.

He mov'd to go—again he turn'd,
Again to feeling did he yield;
Then, whilst each eye with light'ning burn'd,
Rush'd from her arms, and sought the field.

And now from Bunker's hill revolv'd,
The din of arms, with deep rebound;
High borne in air, thick smoke evolv'd,
Now deep'ning murmurs swell'd around.

She paused—she listen'd—paused again,
With anguish torn and soul depress'd;
Whilst echoes from the hill, the plain,
With direst terrors shook her breast.

Dismay'd, distracted, now to heav'n
She look'd—now wildly glanced amain;
Now droop'd sad as the bird of even,
Now sigh'd and look'd to heav'n again.

In view a rocky steep aspired,
Perchance it overlooks the fight;
She trembling said, and phrenzy-fired,
Rush'd on and gain'd its ridgy height.

But on her sight what horrors broke!
For now, she saw, not distant far,
Half hid in rolling flamy smoke,
In dread confusion mix the war.

Her clasping hands—her eyes that rove,
Bespeak her feelings as they rise;
Ah where, she cries, is now my love,
He bleeds perchance, perchance he dies.

And shall I vainly linger here,
While he may sink, 'mid war's alarms?
No, if he die, hence ev'ry fear,
He'll die in his own ELLEN's arms.

She said, and from the summit high,
Down rush'd, the seat of war to gain;
For startled reason seem'd to fly,
And desperation fired her brain.

Braced by the pow'rs of love and woe,
Her trembling limbs new strength acquired;
She reach'd the spot, as firmly slow
Columbia's breaking bands retired.

Here, moving squadrons filed away,
Their order steady;—in each look,
A fire that seem'd to wish delay,
A brav'ry, that no danger shook.

But yonder, battle's fury rung,
For there, a host, defying might,
Like tygers fierce, that guard their young,
To shield the rest braved all the fight.

There 'mid the foremost of the brave,
Her hero caught her searching eye—
"She knew him by a plume she gave,"
And onward rush'd—she knew not why.

But oh! what tongue, what pow'r can speak,
Can of her soul the feelings tell;

Her air of madness—frantic shriek
For now her love—her EDWIN *fell!*

Fell, while the foe yet onward press'd—
She reached him, and quick kneeling by,
Up-raised him to her throbing breast;
He cried, in glory's cause I die—

My ELLEN—here his strength was spent,
To heav'n he breath'd a pray'r-wing'd sigh;
Ah! would, she cried, heav'n were content
To snatch me ere thy spirit fly.

All-ruling pow'rs! heav'n mark'd her woe
'Twould seem, for now in all her charms,
A winged agent from the foe,
Gave her to dying EDWIN's arms,

A corse—from each life's glow retired,
Now mixt in air their parting breath:
They perish'd—as they oft desired—
United in the arms of DEATH. GLORMON.

ORIGINAL.

SONNET, TO AN INFANT.

SWEET innocent, to care unknown,
Tender bud, expanding charms,
(As the rose ere fully blown)
Smiling in thy mother's arms.

May sorrow's canker ne'er distress
Thy op'ning mind, nor grief oppress
Thy rip'ning years, nor malice dart
Its poison'd arrows in thy heart.

But innocence its charms display,
And with engaging virtues blend,
To bless thy life—thy path attend,
And heav'n-born mildness gild thy day.

Then when thy sun shall set in tranquil eve,
Thy sainted spirit angels shall receive. ALICIAN.

PUBLISHED BY J. W. SCOTT, NO. 147 CHESNUT-STREET, PHIL'A.